

REMARKS

After entry of Applicants' Amendment of January 17, 2003, the Examiner is kindly requested to further amend claims 1, 6, 19, 20 and 22 as shown above and in the attached Appendix, and as suggested by the Examiner in the February 13, 2003 Advisory Action.

Entry and consideration of this Amendment are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX
VERSION WITH MARKING TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a floor covering comprising the steps of :

scattering powder, granules or pellets of a thermoplastic material onto a first substrate to form a first coating;

applying a second substrate over the first coating;

scattering powder, granules or pellets of a thermoplastic material onto the second substrate, after said second substrate has been applied over the first coating, to form a second coating

leading the thus coated substrates between a pair of belts of a low pressure double belt press;

applying heat to [gel] fuse the coatings between the belts;

smoothing the [gelled] fused coatings between a pair of nipping rollers to provide a layer of desired thickness; and

cooling the layer.

6. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the fused coatings are smoothed by leading the [gelled] fused coatings between a nipping means.

19. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 including the steps of:

scattering a first thermoplastic material onto a first belt;

applying the first substrate over the thermoplastic material,

wherein said scattering of powder, granules or pellets onto a first substrate comprises scattering a second thermoplastic material onto the first substrate ; and

further wherein said applying heat to the belts to fuse the coatings comprises [gelling] fusing the thermoplastic material to form a backing layer on one face of the first substrate and a saturation or basecoat layer on the other face of the first substrate.

20. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 19 wherein the second thermoplastic material forms a saturation layer and the method includes the steps of:

- scattering a third thermoplastics material over the saturation layer;
- leading the substrates between a pair of belts; and
- applying heat to the belts to [gel] fuse the third thermoplastic material to form a basecoat layer on the saturation layer.

22. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the substrates are cooled, after [gelling] fusing by leading the pair of belts through a cooling station.